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769 living. It also emphasizes the magical powers associated with sex
831 which is linked with feelings of guilt and anxiety expressed in the taboos clustered round marriage, childbirth and the rearing of children. This feeling of guilt is so widely diffused that innocent
[783] people are thought to suffer from the magical results of a sex misdemeanour committed by someone else.

581 These beliefs support the institution of marriage since safety
789 from magical danger is acquired by means of a ceremony which can
837 only be carried out by a man's head wife. No Bemba supposes that a husband will be kept from adultery by this means, but the legal wife is the only person who can secure him and those near him from the resultant punishment.

622 The reader is asked to bear in mind, without attempting further
372 analysis, the association that exists in Bemba ideology between
831 chieftainship, fire, sex and power to influence the fertility of the
789 land and its people, and to remember that these powers are hurt
753 by blood, intercourse out of marriage, death, murder, lion-killing and all cold, terrible or 'bad things' (*fibi*). Fertility which is so much desired is produced by conduct pleasing to the ancestors, and to senior and especially paternal relatives, the blessings of persons in authority and the carrying out of the ritual of marriage. Illness is inflicted usually on the innocent party, by sex relations out of marriage without ritual purification, by bad conduct, and because of injury to people who, since they have died in a state of righteous indignation, will 'come back' to haunt the family which did them wrong.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

642 The most characteristic features of the Bemba social structure
611 are its hierarchical and authoritarian type of government, of which
591 the apex is a paramount chief believed to have supernatural powers; and its system of matrilineal descent with uxorilocal marriage.

643 The political structure of the Bemba is a centralized one. Its unity under a single head, the *Citimukulu*, was achieved, in 1931 at any rate, because of a belief in the spiritual powers the king was

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Appendix A

881 with girls' among the peoples of Mozambique origin as they do on
171 the coast from which the Yao, Makua and Makonde come, but the
611 girls' rites are not mere replicas of the boys' but are definitely a series of nubility ceremonies starting with puberty and ending with the celebration of pregnancy and childbirth. The coincidence between matriliny and agricultural activities which was postulated by some of the earlier evolutionary writers, such as Bachofen and Schmidt, exists here in actual fact.

This correlation has probably little bearing on the chisungu, except that in this area the introduction of stock has usually been followed by the giving of cattle as a marriage payment for the bride and hence the bridegroom's acquisition of rights over his children, and his achievement of the equally important right of virilocal residence. Where the high marriage payments are made, as in Angola or in parts of Nyasaland, the Bemba matrilineal, uxorilocal marriage by service pattern, which I have tried to associate with girls' fertility ceremonies, tends to disappear.

881 I cannot test the validity of the correlation I tried to suggest
171 between the importance of the Bemba chisungu and an ancestral
769 cult mainly carried out by chiefs. The evidence is not full enough
642 on this point. Nevertheless it is worth pointing out that the Bemba are the only people in this group with ritual kingship and a centralized government developed into key institutions of the whole tribal structure, and the Bemba ceremonies are more complex than those of any of the other tribes mentioned. The rites among Kazembe's Lunda may be found to be as complex, but on the present evidence, the Bemba are the only other tribe in the group which has, or had, a 'divine' king, chiefs with ritual powers, matrilineal descent and uxorilocal marriage. From the evidence at present available the ceremonies that come next in order of complexity are those of the Yao. Here there is no 'divine king' or centralized organization, but the strength of the matrilineage and the emphasis on matrilineal descent as a basis of residence seems to be stronger than in the other tribes in the area, judging from Mitchell's evidence. The other questions I have asked throughout this book must await their answers when the field evidence is fuller.

622 territories generally in the capacity of sub-chiefs. Subject chiefs of alien stock, generally of Bisa origin, also hold some chieftainships particularly in the west.

Cases of disputed succession were decided by a meeting composed of members of the royal family and the *bakabilo* or hereditary councillors. Disputed successions and feuds between one chief and another were common in the old days.

642 The succession to Bisa chieftainships also goes from brother to brother
622 and then to sister's son or sister's daughter's son, but the Bisa never
184 reached the same degree of centralisation; they live in more scattered groups and, before the arrival of the Europeans, had no Paramount Chief. Little is known of the political structure of the Aushi and the Unga, but they have certainly not achieved a centralised government, and some of the smaller Aushi chiefs are living on tiny islands in the Bangweulu swamps.

THE MACHINERY OF CENTRALIZATION

642 The Bemba can be reckoned as a more or less centralised State in that
643 its major chiefdoms are controlled by members of one royal family; its Paramount Chief had the command of the army and has the supreme control of supernatural power, the possession of the most sacred of the tribal relics and the right of appointment to lesser chiefdoms. He also provides the final judicial court of appeal.

643 The Paramount Chief and some of the biggest territorial chiefs have
645 attached to them a group of hereditary officials who combine ritual with political and judicial functions. In the case of the Paramount Chief these officials, the *bakabilo*, number between 35 and 40 and form an advisory council on special matters of state. They include the hereditary officials in charge of the chief's relics (*bakeny*), the royal buriers and embalmers (*bafingo*) and a number of other officials carrying out special ritual functions in connection with the ceremonial of kingship. These *bakabilo* are in a very powerful position. They are hereditary heads of villages near the capital; they are immune from giving tribute to the chief; they used to wear special head-dresses; they must keep the same sex-taboos as the chief, and are buried in the central district under his control. The real *bakabilo* are those connected with the Paramount's court. They are in fact called "*the Bakabilo*". The *bakabilo* of the *citimbulo* bury all the major chiefs and they act as regents at the death of the Paramount; any matter of tribal importance, such as a succession dispute, is placed before them. They check the power of the Paramount, since they can, and sometimes do, refuse to perform the ritual on which he depends for the exercise of his power. Being hereditary officials with lines of descent as old as that of the Paramount Chief himself they cannot be removed at will. They form a central tribal council but not a public assembly such as the *pitso* of the Sotho-speaking peoples.

622 Each chief has certain executive officials to support him. These in-
624 clude the *bafiloilo* or heads of the divisions of a capital, who maintain peace in the royal village, organise tribute labour and allocate land for cultivation. They are appointed from among the chief's own favourites and supporters. Each big chief had formerly a number of captains or *bashika* of whom some were hereditary and most were Appointed at the chief's will.

two whose names were hereditary and most were appointed at the chief's will.

CHANGES IN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION INTRODUCED BY EUROPEAN CONTACT

622 642 In 1900 Northeastern Rhodesia came under the control of the British South Africa Company which had its headquarters at Kasama. While the chiefs were recognised, their functions were gradually taken over by the Administration and new courts of law administering a mixture of European and native law were set up under British magistrates. Chiefs were used largely as executive officials bereft of authority and privileges.

In 1924 Northern Rhodesia became a British Protectorate and in 1929 a modified form of "indirect rule" was introduced into the area by the Native Authority and the Native Courts Ordinance of 1929, subsequently modified in 1936. Chiefs, and in some instances chiefs' councils, were constituted Native Authorities, whereby they were given juridical powers over specific territories and encouraged to issue orders on matters such as village constitution, native movements, bush burning, et al. Native courts were also recognised and given jurisdiction over all cases except murder, witchcraft and issues implicating Europeans. The chiefs were given salaries - small in comparison with those received by other chiefs in Northern Rhodesia[1] and inadequate to their needs[2] - but which were, at any rate, indications of Government support. Native treasuries were set up in 1937.

Bemba chiefs had never lost their authority completely during the period of "direct rule", probably owing to the continuing strength of the people's belief in their ritual powers. They were no longer able to rely for their power on military success or the right of mutilating their subjects for offences, but the new measures gave them considerable government backing. But the poverty of the chiefs under modern conditions prevented the machinery of government from functioning. The old rulers were asked to carry out new executive duties but their councillors and messengers became increasingly unwilling and unable to serve them. Formerly they were fed by the chief while doing his work, but today the Government's discouragement, if not actual prohibition, of tribute labour, prevents the accumulation of food at the capital. It became necessary here as elsewhere to introduce some form of payment for court officials. The bakabilo were recognised as an advisory council in 1936 and it seems likely that judicial court officials will be paid in increasing numbers. Similar changes are probably taking place in other areas.

RELIGIOUS AND MAGICAL BELIEFS

(a) GODS OUTSIDE THE ANCESTRAL CULT.

776 In common with other central Bantu peoples, the Bemba and Bisa believe there is a high god, *Leza*, who lives in the sky, controls thunder, sends

(1) £40 p.a. as compared with £1,700 for the Barotse chief. See Richards, T, 1940, p.116.
(2) See Richards, T, 1939.

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THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF THE BEMBA TRIBE—NORTH-EASTERN RHODESIA

By AUDREY I. RICHARDS

I. Bantu Political Organization—Some General Features

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THE political systems of most of the Bantu peoples known to us show certain striking similarities, particularly as far as South and Central Africa are concerned. We are apparently dealing in each case with a tribal organization that is an outgrowth of a smaller lineage group, either split off from a parent stem in search of independence and new territory, or scattered by the onslaught of an enemy. In South, Central, and to a lesser extent East Africa most of the ethnic groups now known as tribes have a surprisingly short history of occupation of their present habitat —rarely more than 200 years and sometimes as little as 50 to 100. For this reason the original kinship structure of the immigrant people can still be recognized as the framework of their political system. Authority is almost invariably based on descent, whether within the family, the village, the district, or the nation, and the chief of the tribe combines executive, ritual, and judicial functions according to the pattern of leadership in each constituent kinship unit. Like the family head, he is a priest of an ancestral cult, believed in many cases to have a mystic power over the land, and he invariably claims rights over his people's labour and produce. The hierarchy of Bantu society allows only one type of authority, one basis of power, and one set of attributes in its leaders in most of the tribes so far described.

Besides this personal relationship established by tradition between the Bantu subject and his chief, yet another feature of the political organization depends on facts of kinship, emotional, legal, and ritual. Political power and prerogatives tend to become concentrated in the hands of descendants of the original lineage group, of which the chief is the living representative, and in many areas tribal cohesion seems very largely to depend on the predominance of this ruling line, whether the latter is to be reckoned as the first Bantu people to occupy the particular territory, or whether it conquered the earlier inhabitants and subsequently

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642 171

built up a new state. We find tribes called after the name of the original leader of the nuclear community[1] (e.g. the Zulu, or the lineage groups of North Basutoland loosely described as Bamoheng, or Bamoketela): and others called after his clan (e.g. Kwena, Mangwato). The descendants of the first chief's clan may form a ruling caste (e.g. Zulu, Swazi, Bemba), and the total number of clans in the tribe may be arranged in order of precedence based on the tradition of the original migration into the area, or else the degree of relationship with the descent group of the chief.[2] The next of kin of the chief may play a definite part in the political organization, may claim rights to territorial chieftainships or villages, membership of tribal councils or smaller advisory bodies (e.g. the council formed by the chief's brother, sister, and near relatives among the Venda), or they may act as a regency council at the chief's death (e.g. Venda, Tswana, Swazi).

642 171 121

These then seem to be common features of Bantu political organization—the position of the chief as head of a community held together by bonds, real or fictitious, of kinship and as priest of an ancestral cult, and a political structure based on the dominance of a leading family line or clan. It is the differences in the machinery of government and in the incidence of tribal authority within this common pattern that make the interest of a comparative work like the present. In examining a particular case, there are a number of different conditioning factors which seem to account for these variations in political structure. Of these the most obvious appear to be the following: (*a*) the length of time the tribe has inhabited its present territory; (*b*) the type of immigration, whether by peaceful penetration, ejection of other units or their amalgamation;[3] (*c*) the emphasis placed on different prin-

[1] Schapera uses this term to describe a ruling group which has conquered and finally amalgamated other peoples often of foreign stock (cf. p. 57).

[2] cf. the heirarchy of Ganda clans: the precedence observed in tasting first-fruits in order of clan seniority among the Sotho peoples, and the respect still accorded to the Zulu and Swazi clans that have split off from the original royal stock, when it became necessary to contract marriages between members of one house.

[3] Compare the differences in size and homogeneity between single tribes largely of one stock with a single paramount chief (Swazi, Bemba); the congeries of small autonomous tribelets with similar cultural features but no supreme head (the swamp peoples of north-eastern Rhodesia or the low-veld tribes of northern Transvaal); or the amalgamation of a number of different ethnic groups into one empire by conquest or absorption (the old Luba Empire of the Congo, or that of the Zulu under Shaka or the Basotho under Moshesh).

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ciples of social grouping such as descent, age, sex differences, or local ties by which the tribe may be integrated and the incidence of authority determined; (*d*) the economic bases of the people's activities which affect their degree of dispersal, the form of leadership required, and the economic values associated with political prerogatives; (*e*) the type of foreign rule to which the tribe is subject and the European elements that are effecting its political development, i.e. variations in policy from the administrative system known as Indirect Rule in Tanganyika, Northern Rhodesia, Uganda, to the more direct government by the white man in South Africa or the attempts made to create new political institutions for Natives, such as the Bunga system of the Transkei.

All these factors will be found to account for differences in political organization among a number of the kindred peoples known as the Bantu, and I shall try to analyse the Bemba system along these lines.

II. The Bemba Tribe

(*a*) *Tribal Composition.* The Bemba tribe at present inhabits the Tanganyika plateau of north-eastern Rhodesia, between the four great lakes—Tanganyika to the north-east, Nyassa to the east, and Mweru and Bangweolu to the north-west and west respectively. They number to-day about 140,000, very sparsely scattered over the country at a density of an average 3·75 per square mile.

The Bemba trace their origin to the area now known as the Belgian Congo and declare that they were originally an offshoot from the great Luba people which inhabits the Kasai district. The fact that the first ancestor of the Bemba is known as Citi Muluba ('Citi the Luban') substantiates this tradition, together with the cultural similarities still noted between the two peoples and the fact that Luban words, no longer understood by the Bemba commoner, are still used as part of the religious ritual at the paramount chief's court. The legends of immigration are numerous and circumstantial. The first arrivals apparently crossed the Lualaba River, which forms the western boundary of their present territory, about the middle of the eighteenth century, and travelled north and east until they established their first headquarters near Kasama, the present administrative centre of the Bemba country. From the sociological point of view, their history

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(c) Economic Background. The Bemba are an agri-
cultural people.

like most of the Central Bantu group to which they belong. They keep no cattle. Tsetse-fly at present prevents their keeping stock over most of the country, but in any case they seem to have no pastoral traditions, whatever they may have had formerly. Thus they have no means of storing wealth as have the Southern Bantu. Their marriage contracts are fulfilled by service and not by the passage of cattle. In the old days military glory and the extraction of tribute from conquered peoples seems to have been the dominant ambition of the Bemba chiefs, and their wealth consisted in the size of their following and the amount of service they were able to command. This fact profoundly influences their position at the present day (cf. p. 116).

The soil of most of this district is poor and it has not attracted white settlement. The staple crop is finger millet (*eleusine coracana*), while some kafir corn, a little maize, legumes, and pumpkins are also grown. The people practise shifting cultivation of a primitive type, and the plentiful supply of land and the lack of any localized natural resources which might attract the inhabitants to settle in one area rather than another all affect the political system. As has been shown, they decrease the strength of local ties as against political or kinship affiliations, and they account for the fact that the power to distribute land is not an important prerogative of leadership in distinction to conditions in most Southern Bantu tribes.

Hunting and fishing contribute a small share of the food-supply only. Organized marketing does not exist, and under modern conditions no cash crop has been found for this area. This fact, together with the absence of opportunities for local employment, forces the adult male population to look for work outside the tribal area, with resultant effects, as will be seen, on the political system of the tribe.

(*d*) *White Administration.* The type of white administration introduced in this area is described on pp. 112–20.

III. Basis of Authority

The positions of leadership in Bemba society consist of the following offices: (*a*) *territorial rulers* (chiefs and headmen); (*b*) *administrative officers and councillors*; (*c*) *priests, guardians of sacred shrines, and magic specialists with economic functions*; (*d*) *army leaders* in the old days. Succession to all these offices is

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based on descent in nearly every case. Chieftainships were limited to one clan, as we have seen; some of the councillorships (i.e. the *bakabilo*) are confined to a few of the older clans; and headmanships, though they may be won through the chief's favour, tend to become hereditary in their turn. All priestly offices are hereditary without exception, as is natural where an ancestral cult of this type is practised. Magico-economic specialists, particularly those in charge of fishing villages, usually acquire their powers by descent also, as do some of the doctors and diviners (*ngoma*). In each case the supernatural powers almost invariably correlated with political authority in this area are conferred by a rite, of great complexity, in the case of the succession of a chief, known as *ukupyumba*. For these reasons it is essential to study the dogma of descent by which these powers are believed to be transferred from one generation to another, and the legal rules of succession by which status and office are passed from one man to another.

(a) *The Dogma of Descent.* By dogma of descent I mean, first, those theories of procreation[1] which express a people's beliefs as to the physical contribution of the father and mother to the formation of the child, and hence the traditional conception of the physical continuity between one generation and the next; and next their beliefs as to the influence of the dead members of each social group over the living, and hence the social identification[2] of a man with the line of his dead ancestors.

Among the Bemba it is believed that a child is made from the blood of a woman which she is able to transmit to her male and female children. A man can possess this blood in his veins, but cannot pass it on to his children, who belong to a different clan. Physiological paternity is recognized. Children are often described as being like their fathers, and are expected to give the latter affection and respect although they have no legal obligations to them under the matrilineal system. 'We take our fathers' presents because they begot us,' they say. But it is nevertheless the physical

[1] This term was first introduced by Malinowski, who showed how the rules of matrilineal descent among the Trobriand islanders are buttressed by beliefs that the father makes no physical contribution to the birth of his child. Similar material published by Rattray from the Ashanti area shows a belief in a double contribution of blood from the mother and spirit from the father correlated with a bilateral emphasis on descent.

[2] This is a term employed in a very stimulating manner by Radcliffe-Brown.

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to perform the ritual functions that are necessary to the chief's state.[1]

Other advisory officials consist of the near relatives of the chief himself. These do not attend discussions as to succession to chieftainships, but are constantly informed of the progress of affairs. The paramount's mother and the Makasa (the eldest 'son of the chief') play an important part in this way. In the past senior members of the royal family seem to have intervened occasionally when some chief was behaving too outrageously, as, for instance, in the case of a sub-chief, Fyanifyani, apparently attacked by a sort of blood-lust. This man was removed from his office, according to history.

In brief, the Bemba system of government is not a democratic one in our sense of the word. The elder commoner has fewer rights to speak on tribal matters than have the Zulu, Swazi, or even some of the Sotho peoples. The affairs of the *icalo* are in the hands of a body of hereditary councillors whose offices and most of whose deliberations are secret. But I was impressed by the sense of tribal welfare which these *bakabilo* showed, and they were quite able to discuss and shrewdly adapt some old tribal precedent to modern conditions. Their strength, as regards tribal government at the present day, is their *esprit de corps* and sense of responsibility; their weakness, the fact that in the eyes of the people and the Government their function is mainly a ritual one.

VI. The Integration of the Tribe

The integration of the tribe depends chiefly on the sentiment of tribal cohesion and loyalty to the paramount, and the means by which the activities of the different districts are brought under one control in this widely dispersed group. The dogmas of kinship have been shown again and again to be the basis of tribal feeling and of the allegiance given to the territorial and paramount chiefs. In other Bantu tribes there is some tribe-wide organization such as the Nguni regiment system, that seems to act as an integrating force. There are also forms of public ceremonial at which all the adult men of the tribe are gathered, or all the warrior classes. The first-fruit ceremonies of the Swazi or of the Zulu in

[1] During 1934 I found the paramount living in grass huts. He was unable to build his new village because the *bakabilo*, indignant at his behaviour, refused to perform the foundation ceremony for the new community.

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622 643 782 But here again ritual is one of the big integrating forces. The Citimukulu can initiate a series of sacrifices (*ukupepo lukalamba*), which start at his relic houses and spread to all the shrines throughout the land. The *bukabilo* are sent from Lubemba to bury any of the bigger territorial chiefs who die in their distant *ifyalo* and to install the new heir. The paramount prays for rain on the rare occasions when it is required, on behalf of the whole tribe. Thus for ritual purposes, in spite of the quarrels and jealousies between different lines of the royal family, the whole Bemba country can be said to act as a whole and to be conscious of its unity. If the paramount chief were to turn Christian before the political institutions of this tribe have been considerably adapted, tribal cohesion would, I think, be very much weakened, whether temporarily or permanently.

VII. Post-European Changes

177 642 643 The advent of British rule in Northern Rhodesia changed at once the position of the Bemba chief and his political machinery, and it continues to do so in an increasing variety of ways. Some of these changes are due to the actual introduction of new authorities into the area—whether Government officials, missionaries, or other Europeans—who have either replaced the old Bemba officials, divided the spheres of authority with them, or introduced entirely new conceptions of the functions of government itself. Others seem to be mainly the result of changed economic conditions, particularly the introduction of money, the institution of wage labour, and the provision of opportunities for money-making in industrial undertakings outside the territory. Such factors, over which the Administration has often little direct control, have inevitably affected the position of the Bemba chief. They have altered the people's conception of authority, destroyed the whole basis of labour on which the powers of the chief depended, and the old correlation between political authority, economic privilege, and military strength.

177 The total effects of white domination on the Bemba political organization have not yet proceeded to their full length, but it will be well to indicate some of the changes produced by the introduction of a new machinery of government, e.g. the alteration in the balance of the old tribal system, and the resultant weakening of the personal relationship between subject and chief upon which

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the whole structure of authority depended. To do so, it will be simplest to try to indicate the position when the Europeans first took over the administration of the country, and to compare this with the situation produced by the introduction of a modified system of Indirect Rule in 1929.

(*a*) *New Authorities Introduced.* In 1900 north-eastern Rhodesia was placed under the control of the British South Africa Company by an Order-in-Council after its officials had established posts in or near the Bemba country at Kasama, the present administrative centre of the northern province of Northern Rhodesia, in 1899 and at Mirongo, near the present Chinsali, in 1896. This administration continued until 1924, when the Colonial Office assumed control. To the Bemba, considered a particularly fierce and warlike tribe before the arrival of the white man, the superior force of the new administration must have been immediately apparent. The officials of the British South Africa Company were better armed. They at once intervened in a case of disputed succession over the Mwambaahip which had then fallen vacant, and appointed their own nominee instead of his maternal uncle, who was endeavouring to take the title by force. One by one the functions of the old chiefs were taken over by the new authorities. New courts of law were introduced, and though some Native customary law was administered by the white officials, yet here as elsewhere customs considered 'repugnant to natural justice and morality' were prohibited, this category was such a large one[1] that to the natives it must have seemed like the introduction of a new code. Certain totally new offences were also created, e.g. the killing of elephants and a number of other forms of game, the digging of game-pits, and the use of primitive iron-smelteries. The penalties for legal offences were changed too. For mutilation at the hands of the chief, enslavement, and compensation paid to the injured party was substituted imprisonment, beating, fines paid to the Government, and the death sentence. New demands on natives' goods and services were also made, such as the hut-tax of 3*s.* 6*d.*, afterwards changed to a poll-tax, which now stands at 7*s.* 6*d.*, and the enrolment of natives as carriers, road-builders, &c., in Government pay. The B.S.A. administration recognized the Bemba chiefs and in 1916 defined their authority more

[1] e.g. accusations of witchcraft, murders for ritual purposes, the use of the ordeal in determining guilt, &c.

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177 exactly,[1] but they were used in the main as executive officials and
642 shorn of most of their authority and their privileges, such as the owning of slaves, the possession of arms, the right of mutilation, the power of administering the poison test, and the collection of the ivory tusks.

177 The sanctions for the power of the new administration were, in
641 native eyes I think, its military strength and the fact that it had overcome the once powerful Bemba chiefs, and later, as new economic values were acquired, its apparently endless wealth.[2] But when talking with elder natives one is aware how largely the pattern of fear and personal allegiance accorded to the old chiefs was transferred with little modification to the new authorities. The same terms are used for both: there is the same assumption that the tax, game-laws, and even the paid employment of natives are all dues demanded by the Government for its own aggrandisement, as was the tribute of the chiefs in the old days.[3] There is much the same belief in the ruler's complete omnipotence, and a similar expectation of sudden arbitrary action, even as I noticed, when the most good-natured and reasonable officials appeared to be concerned. It is no exaggeration to state that each Government station is in effect a native capital or *umuzumbu*. Each has its district officer, an authority like the chief with a following to whom allegiance may mean advance, and who is regarded with mingled fear and loyalty. Each has its force of messengers and police, employs its own labour.

177 The missionary bodies in the country must also be regarded
797 as new authorities set up in the tribe. The White Fathers entered the Bemba country just ahead of the B.S.A. administration and set up their first post near Kasama, in the heart of the Bemba country. They can still be said to dominate this central district, although the Church of Scotland Mission and the London Missionary Society also operate elsewhere. Each different mission station must also be regarded as an *umuzumbu*. Many

[1] cf. Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the financial and economic position of Northern Rhodesia (1938), p. 179.

[2] Older natives seemed to me to comment most on the ferocity of the Government officials (*ubukali*), and the younger to speak of the wealth of the Administration.

[3] It is common for old men and women to refer to their sons who have either been recruited or else gone voluntarily to the mines as having been 'seized by the Government', and to speak of opportunities arranged for the sale of their grain as having their food 'seized' by the native commissioner.

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District Commissioner's courts in spite of thirty years or so of non-recognition. Natives took there the cases they believed the European magistrates did not understand, i.e. ritual matters, affairs with their roots in past history, and certain civil actions. Thus there were still some functions which the people believed the Bemba chief could perform better than all the new white authorities in the territory, besides the great historic tradition behind his authority.

Effects of the 1929 Ordinances. By the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances of 1929 a form of Indirect Rule was introduced into Northern Rhodesia, the power of the authorities then instituted being still further extended and more closely defined by a subsequent Ordinance of 1936. Chiefs, and in some cases councils of chiefs, were constituted as native authorities by these measures. They were given jurisdiction over definite territories, and encouraged to issue orders on matters of hygiene, bush-burning, the movement of natives, the constitution of villages, &c. Native courts were also recognized and given jurisdiction over all cases except witchcraft, murder, issues involving Europeans, &c. The chiefs were given salaries, small in actual fact and quite inadequate to the needs of an administrator at the present time,[1] yet in the eyes of natives, who are unaccustomed to see large sums of money at any one time, they were substantial marks of Government favour and often described as such. Clerks and *kapasas* (messengers), at exceedingly low salaries, were also attached to the courts. No financial control was given until recently (1936), when native treasuries were set up.[2]

As far as I could judge,[3] this new policy certainly did much to restore the personal prestige of the chiefs. The loss of an authority which was largely based on ritual was compensated for to some extent by the evident support of the Government. Most Bemba realize clearly that their chiefs are still merely servants of the Administration and note the fact that they cannot imprison or try the most important cases, and that their judgements are liable to be reversed, but they often commented to me on what seemed to

[1] Citimukulu receives £60 per annum, Mwamba £30, and the other chiefs less in proportion. For details showing the inadequacy of these amounts cf. my 'Tribal Government in Transition', *Journ. African Society*, vol. xxxiv, 1935.

[2] The Bemba Treasury had a balance of £143 in 1938 on a sum of £1,303 to be divided between six districts. See *Report* cited on p. 114.

[3] I arrived in the country the year after the introduction of these measures.

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177 622 692 them evident signs of favour bestowed by the new policy on their rulers. As we saw, the judicial machinery of the Bemba never really disappeared with the institution of white courts, but the legal recognition of the chiefs' courts by the 1929 Ordinance certainly increased the latter's status tremendously. Successive Government reports have described the new native courts as functioning well, while few charges of excessive fines or hearing fees have been made against the chiefs. Such complaints as I heard seemed to come mainly from educated natives belonging to other areas, particularly from Nyasaland, who found themselves subject for the first time to Bemba law. In the legislative field, determined efforts were made by the district officials to restore the self-confidence of the native authorities and to encourage them, not only to resume functions of government they had lost, but also to take on new tasks, such as the issue of orders as to hygiene, &c. In fact, as regards the personal position of the Bemba chiefs, it may be said that there was a gradual increase in status due to Government support, added to a respect and fear which had never been entirely lost. Their power is in many ways surprising, in view of their poverty, their lack of means to enforce any decisions taken, and the presence in their territories of other authorities in command of their subjects and in particular of large numbers of Christians bound by codes that are not recognized in the chiefs' courts.[1]

177 622 692 645 Apart from the chief's own position, it is necessary to review the political system as a whole. How far was the old machinery of Government re-established by the introduction of the 1929 Ordinances? And, more important still, is such a machinery adapted to the new needs of the tribe? The answer to the first question is a decided, 'No'. The whole balance of authority has been altered, partly by the changed economic position of the chief and partly by lack of Government recognition. We saw that the executive and judicial officials on whom the chief relied were kept together by hope of rewards and food and in some cases in virtue of their religious functions. Nowadays the chief is less able to feed his councillors, principally owing to the decay of the tribute labour system. He does not consider himself obliged to distribute

[1] Some missionary societies have followed the Government policy and have invited chiefs to take a part in school education committees, &c.; others have viewed any increase in the chief's authority as a retrograde step.

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money in the same way as food, and in any case has not sufficient to enable him to reward his people adequately. So that at a time when he is asked to take on new functions of administration his following is becoming smaller and smaller. I have seen Citimukulu hearing cases alone with his paid clerk and watched the *bakabilo* melting away during the midst of the discussion of important matters owing to want of food. This makes an impossible situation which may be changed for the better by the greater measure of financial control which the Government has recently granted to the native authorities,[1] though the sums now allotted to native treasuries are small, and lack of funds has always prevented the compensation of chiefs for the lack of their tribute labour and other perquisites that has occurred in Nigeria, Barotseland, and elsewhere.

Government recognition of the political organization of the tribe and its purposeful adaptation to modern conditions is also essential at the present time. Apart from the economic breakdown at the chiefs' courts which has just been indicated, much of the trouble has been due to the fact that no serious investigation of the judicial, executive, and advisory machinery of Government was made in the first instance. Chiefs were constituted as authorities with little study of the way in which their orders were to be enforced. They were listed as 'members of court', but, though headmen and council were mentioned as eligible to sit on such courts, the presence of the latter was not apparently compulsory. The *bakabilo's* important advisory functions as a tribal council and a potential regency council were not recognized until anthropological research in the area had been made.[1] The unfortunate result was that the chief felt free to act without this former check on his power and openly expressed to me his delight in the fact. The councillors, on the other hand, felt discouraged, and declared: 'The Government likes the chiefs. It does not listen to us, the *Babemba*.' Hence a political system that could never have been described as democratic now provides less check than ever on the chief's authority.

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The difficulty from an administrative point of view is evident. Here is a system of political authority based largely on hereditary ritual privilege. To abandon the *bakabilo* council is to do without a body of men with strong traditions of government and a sense of

[1] Twenty-five of the *bakabilo* are now given £1 a year (see *Report* cited, p. 144).